

Chapter 6 Principles for Effective Regional Integrated Resource Planning and Providing State Assistance

The State should encourage and provide technical, financial and administrative assistance to inclusive, collaborative and regionally- and watershed-based resource planning efforts. It should encourage and provide incentives to local and regional agencies and governments to develop diverse and balanced resource management portfolios and plans, implement multi-objective projects, and maximize their regional self sufficiency. The State recommends that regional planning efforts use the principles described in this section when preparing and implementing their integrated resource plans.

Because the demand for State assistance exceeds resources and funding, the following nine principles can serve as criteria for competitively scoring proposals from local water agencies and governments applying for State grants and loans:

1. Has, or is developing, a long-term, integrated resource plan

The State should encourage and give preference for assistance and funding to regional planning initiatives that are based on regional or watershed integrated resource planning using a comprehensive stakeholder-based planning process. This integrated regional and/or watershed planning would: (1) promote multi-disciplinary planning with a geographic focus, (2) emphasize local/regional initiatives, and (3) recognize unique regional considerations.

The State should give preference to initiatives emphasizing long-term planning (30-50 year planning horizon).

2. Identifies benefits, beneficiaries & mitigations

The State should give preference to assisting and funding regional water initiatives that have evaluated their program and projects using criteria for economic growth, environmental quality, and social equity as co-equal objectives. Based on this comprehensive assessment, the planning initiative should determine potential economic, environmental, and social benefits, adverse impacts and beneficiaries; acknowledge broad public trust interests; and include a plan to avoid, minimize and mitigate for adverse impacts, including

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1. Has, or is developing, a long-term, integrated resource plan
2. Identifies benefits, beneficiaries & mitigations
3. Promotes sustainable resource management
4. Provides environmental benefits
5. Increases regional self sufficiency
6. Increases regional drought resiliency
7. Promotes environmental justice
8. Promotes communication, coordination, cooperation & collaboration among local agencies & governments
9. Uses sound science, best data and local knowledge

1 third-party impacts, and minimizing disproportionate adverse impacts on
2 vulnerable communities.

3 The State should give preference for investing public funds to regional initiatives
4 with statewide significance, which include benefit-cost and least-cost analyses of
5 alternatives, have weighed environmental and socioeconomic costs in the
6 decision making process, and identify beneficiaries who will pay a share of the
7 cost.

9 **3. Promotes sustainable resource management**

10 The State should encourage, assist and share in funding regional initiatives that
11 are working to improve ecological sustainability such as those promoted through
12 watershed planning and management (from headwaters to basin outlet). The
13 State should give preference to initiatives that benefit multiple objectives (water,
14 land, air, wastewater, energy, etc).

15 The State should also give preference to regional initiatives that include planning
16 tools and specific response strategies for minimizing the potential adverse
17 impacts of global climate change on their regional water supplies, water quality,
18 water infrastructure, and flood protection.

20 **4. Provides environmental benefits**

21 The State should give preference to regional and local initiatives that would
22 protect, restore or enhance the environment. This may include plans to reduce
23 pollution, improve stream flow, reduce groundwater overdraft, promote storm
24 water reuse, and provide water for the environment.

26 **5. Increases regional self sufficiency**

27 A desired outcome of integrated resource planning at the regional level is
28 becoming more self sufficient by minimizing the need to import water from
29 another hydrologic region, as advanced by SB 672, sponsored by Senator
30 Machado. The State should encourage and give preference to programs and
31 projects that would minimize the need to import water from other hydrologic
32 regions. An example would be for regions to reduce their reliance during drought
33 conditions on water from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

35 **6. Increases regional drought resiliency**

36 The State should encourage and give preference for assistance and funding to
37 regional planning initiatives that would implement resource management
38 strategies that among other benefits would make the region more resilient and
39 resistant to drought. In California, drought contingency planning is an important

component of the regional integrated resource plan. Strategies could include, but would not be limited to, recycled municipal water, conjunctive management, storage, system reoperation, desalination, demand management, and water conservation programs.

7. Promotes environmental justice

All projects sponsored by or partnered with the State, and/or using public funds must ensure environmental justice by providing fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, funding and implementation of resource management projects.

8. Promotes communication, coordination, cooperation & collaboration among local agencies & governments

The State should give preference for providing assistance and funding to regional and local water planning initiatives that would promote and improve communication, coordination, cooperation, and collaboration among local agencies and governments within a region involved in water, resource, and/or land use planning. These regional initiatives should include a public review process with open and transparent decision-making, as well as education and outreach for public, stakeholders, and decision-makers.

The State should assist regional efforts to foster new partnerships among federal, State, and local government, tribal interests, local agencies, and other public and private organizations to promote integrated water, land use, and resource planning and programs. The State should also assist regional initiatives to build partnerships among regions and among agricultural, urban, and environmental water users.

9. Uses sound science, best data and local knowledge

Regional water initiatives should take a cautionary approach to prevent unintended consequences. This is achieved in part by using the best available data and information and using planning methods and analytical techniques that have undergone scientific review.

The State should give preference for assistance and funding to regional water initiatives that include monitoring and data management for project evaluation and have provisions for adaptive management to improve project implementation during the life of the project.

The State should also encourage pilot projects, focused research and incorporating knowledge and experience unique to each region.